

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended): A control apparatus for a vehicle that is provided with an engine and an automatic transmission connected to the engine, the control apparatus comprising:

a detection device that detects an operating state of the transmission;  
a torque regulating mechanism that regulates a torque of the engine; and  
a controller that is configured to:

when the operating state of the transmission is a predetermined operating state and the torque of the engine is to be reduced, make a selection, based on the operating state of the transmission, between: ~~between~~

(i) a first torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced rapidly and ~~temporarily~~ temporarily by:  
(a) an ignition timing delay of the engine and/or  
(b) a reduction of a fuel amount supplied to the engine, and  
(ii) a second torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced continuously, and more smoothly than in the first torque reduction control by reducing an engine intake air amount;

reduce the torque of the engine by the selected one of the first torque reduction control and the second torque reduction control; and

switch to the second torque reduction control while the first torque reduction control continues for a predetermined period of time.

2. – 6. (Canceled):

7. (Previously Presented): A control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the controller is also configured to compute the amount of torque reduction of the engine when the torque of the engine is reduced, based on a torque transmittable by the transmission and based on a torque input to the transmission.

8. (Previously Presented): A control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the controller is also configured to reduce the torque of the engine when the torque input to the transmission exceeds the torque transmittable by the transmission.

9. (Currently Amended): A control apparatus for a vehicle that is provided with an engine and an automatic transmission connected to the engine, the control apparatus comprising:

means for detecting an operating state of the transmission;

means for regulating a torque of the engine;

means for making a selection when the operating state of the transmission is a predetermined operating state and the torque of the engine is to be reduced, based on the operating state of the transmission, between: ~~between~~

(i) a first torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced rapidly and ~~temporarily~~ temporarily by ~~temporarily by~~:

(a) an ignition timing delay of the engine and/or

(b) a reduction of a fuel amount supplied to the engine, and

(ii) a second torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced continuously, and more smoothly than in the first torque reduction control by reducing an engine intake air amount;

means for reducing the torque of the engine by the selected one of the first torque reduction control and the second torque reduction control; and

means for switching to the second torque reduction control while the first torque reduction control continues for a predetermined period of time.

10. (Currently Amended): A control method for a vehicle that is provided with an engine, an automatic transmission connected to the engine, a detection device that detects an operating state of the transmission, and a torque regulating mechanism that regulates a torque of the engine, the control method comprising the steps of:

making a selection when the operating state of the transmission is a predetermined operating state and the torque of the engine is to be reduced, based on the operating state of the transmission, between: ~~between~~

(i) a first torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced rapidly and ~~temporarily~~ temporarily by ~~temporarily~~ by:

(a) an ignition timing delay of the engine and/or

(b) a reduction of a fuel amount supplied to the engine, and

(ii) a second torque reduction control whereby the torque of the engine is reduced continuously, and more smoothly than in the first torque reduction control by reducing an engine intake air amount;

reducing the torque of the engine by the selected one of the first torque reduction control and the second torque reduction control; and

switching to the second torque reduction control while the first torque reduction control continues for a predetermined period of time.

11. (Previously Presented): A control apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the means for making a selection is configured to compute the amount of torque reduction of the engine when the torque of the engine is reduced, based on a torque transmittable by the transmission and based on a torque input to the transmission.

12. (Previously Presented): A control apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the means for reducing the torque of the engine is configured to reduce the torque of the engine when the torque input to the transmission exceeds the torque transmittable by the transmission.

13. (Previously Presented): A control method according to claim 10, wherein the step of making a selection comprises computing the amount of torque reduction of the engine when the torque of the engine is reduced, based on a torque transmittable by the transmission and based on a torque input to the transmission.

14. (Previously Presented): A control method according to claim 10, wherein the step of reducing the torque of the engine comprises reducing the torque of the engine when the torque input to the transmission exceeds the torque transmittable by the transmission.